



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES 18 NEW LEARN AND EARN SCHOOLS OPEN FOR FALL
Two New Schools Open Today in Jackson County

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley announced that 18 new *Learn and Earn* Schools will open across the state this fall. Two of the new schools, the Blue Ridge Virtual Early College High School in Cashiers and the Jackson Early College High School in Sylva, open today. Jackson County Public Schools is the only school district in the state that has opened two new *Learn and Earn* schools this year.

“With 18 new schools opening this fall, more students than ever have a chance to attend a *Learn and Earn* school and earn a free associate’s degree or two years of college credit along with their high school diploma,” said Easley. “*Learn and Earn* and the EARN grants are the best thing to happen to education in a long time. These new schools are providing thousands of students the opportunity to get a free college education and prepare for successful in careers in the 21st century.”

The Blue Ridge Virtual Early College is located on the current Blue Ridge School campus in Cashiers. Students at the school may earn either a high school diploma and an associate's degree or college transfer credit. The Blue Ridge Virtual Early College High School faculty and staff will work together with Southwestern Community College and the business community to prepare students for successful careers. All students at the Blue Ridge Virtual Early College will take online college courses through the UNCG iSchool.

The Jackson County Early College High School is located in Sylva on the campus of Southwestern Community College and offers a progressive educational environment where rigorous and innovative learning experiences are personalized for students. Faculty and staff at the school will focus on facilitating students’ transition to college and will use a curriculum which links academics to work experiences. Students will complete the requirements for a high school diploma and an associate’s degree or college transfer credit. Education partners include Jackson County Public Schools, Southwestern Community College and Western Carolina University.

There are 60 *Learn and Earn* schools opening this fall across the state. Most schools are located on a community college or university campus and allow students to take college courses, tuition free. After no more than five years of study, students earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit or an associate’s degree for free. Other new schools are opening in the next few weeks in Bertie, Cleveland, Currituck, Forsyth, Guilford, Hertford, Hyde, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Madison, Rockingham, Tyrrell, and Warren counties.

Students who do not live near a *Learn and Earn* high school can receive college credit for free by enrolling in *Learn and Earn Online*. As with *Learn and Earn* high schools, students can earn both high school diploma and